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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

**HB 5559**

### ***AN ACT CONCERNING A UNIFORM REGIONAL SCHOOL CALENDAR.***

#### **SUMMARY:**

This bill delays for one year, from the school year starting July 1, 2015 to the year starting July 1, 2016, the requirement that each local or regional board of education adopt a uniform regional school calendar that the regional education service center (RESC) for that board developed and approved. By law, each RESC must develop a uniform school calendar by April 1, 2014 to be used by each local and regional board of education in the RESC's service region, and the calendar must be consistent with the guidelines developed under PA 13-247 (see BACKGROUND).

Furthermore, the bill gives a school board an additional year, until the school year starting July 1, 2017, to implement the uniform calendar if it has an existing employee contract that makes implementation of the uniform regional school calendar impossible. (Some contracts include specific vacation periods or professional development dates.) The bill does not indicate how it is determined that contracts make the regional calendar impossible.

It also makes conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

#### **BACKGROUND**

##### ***Uniform Regional School Calendar Task Force and Guidelines***

A 2013 law established a task force to develop regional uniform school calendar guidelines that had to meet the following requirements:

1. at least 180 days of sessions in a school year (as required by

existing law);

2. a uniform start date;
3. uniform days for statutorily required professional development and in-service training for certified employees; and
4. up to three uniform school vacation periods during each school year, of which up to two must be one-week vacations and one must be during the summer (PA 13-247, §321).

The task force completed its report and guidelines in January 2014. The guidelines include:

1. a common start date for students of the last Wednesday in August, with a three-day flexible window before or after that Wednesday;
2. Election Day in November to be a professional development day when no students attend school; and
3. five flexible days for individual district needs.

### **RESCs**

Each of the six RESCs in the state serves a different geographical region. The RESCs provide various services to local and regional boards of education.

### **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Education Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea    26    Nay    7    (03/19/2014)